LIFE HISTORY, reminiscing, meaningful engagement in Dementia care

PEARL supported care and NT DBMAS partnered to enhance staff getting to know their residents and assist with managing behaviours of dementia with a joint project to have Creative Engagement: Christabelle Baranay run workshops for residents, staff and families on how to create life histories and engage with people with dementia in a positive way. Long lasting skills and resources have been created and relationships strengthened between residents, staff and volunteers.

Christabelle held a successful week in Katherine in April this year at the day respite centre supported by NT DBMAS with clients and staff all working together to create beautiful works of art relevant to individuals life stories and talking pieces for times to come. Christabelle will be travelling again to Katherine in late November for workshops at Katherine Hostel.
WA & NT DBMAS Joint visit to Kimberley region WA 21st-25th October  Jon Benham, June Mathewson, Jessica Stirzager

Jon and June flew from Darwin to Broome while Jess winged in from Bunbury. Day one: Broome facilities were visited (Germanus Kent, Bran Nu Dae) with activity education in BPSD management given to keen staff and a tour of the grounds facilitated: their walking track is being re-juvenated and outdoor areas held practical and interesting furniture where the table doubled as an esky and large panpipes were available for residents to play. KACS and Broome hospital were also visited.

Day two: visit to Derby where contacts, assessments and education were the order of the day at Numbala Nunga, community care and the hospital. Then on to Fitzroy Crossing for an overnight stay. Day three saw education at Guwardi Ngadu, catch up with Fitzroy Clinic, then on the road again to Halls Creek. Jon presented ‘PEACE’ training to the Halls Creek aged care facility, while Jess helped with client assessments. A restful night was had in Halls Creek then day 4 on to Wyndham where more ‘PEACE’ was spread. Lunch at the tin shed then on to Kununurra. Day 5 seeing Kununurra hospital and aged care being spread with PEACE before our journey’s home to Darwin and Bunbury.

Thanks to everyone for their hospitality and enthusiasm in caring for people with dementia who often make caring difficult. See you all again next May.

In the meantime if you need any help or advise when caring for someone with dementia with behaviours that make it hard for you care give us a call on 1800699799.
Meaningful Musical Moments

*Music can help when you are caring for a family member with memory loss*

The University of QLD and University of Melbourne are undertaking research called ‘Meaningful Musical Moments’. In 2009 original research looked at active and receptive music therapy to reduce negative behaviours for people with dementia. This was then extended to using music to improve quality of life for carer’s and people with dementia using 3 main techniques’s – 1) music and movement, 2) singing familiar songs and 3) relaxation.

Carer’s were shown how to use music in a home-based program and since then a **DVD and information booklet** has been created to assist carers and their loved one with dementia trial a 6 week program that is aimed to enrich their lives. The DVD and leaflet explains how you can use your own recorded music collections to initiate and reflexively manage music sessions at times convenient to you and the person you are caring for. We expect that these sessions will lead to a reduction in behaviour impacting on caring, and an increase in your satisfaction with caregiving and your wellbeing.

If there are any interested families and carer’s who would like to participate in this research using the DVD and information booklet in a home environment please contact Gucki Reissenberger: NT DBMAS music therapist for further information.

therapist.dbmas@frontierservices.org

Australian Association of Gerontology

- Are you a Heath Professional working in Aged Care?
- Are you a student interested in Aged Care?
- Do you know someone with an interest in the ageing?
- Let’s get the word out there we are an Ageing territory and this is our time.

The NT is now “Coming of Age”
New members are welcome!!

If you would like more information log onto www.aag.asn.au

Or contact Judy Ratajec Membership Officer NT AAG judy.ratajec@alzheimers.org.au

OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN

The University of Tasmania’s Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), **Understanding Dementia**, is an 11-week online course that builds upon the latest in international research on dementia.

**It’s free and anyone can register.**

The curriculum draws upon the expertise of neuroscientists, clinicians and dementia care professionals in the Wicking Dementia Research and Education Centre.

You can express interest in the next offering of Understanding Dementia, scheduled for March 2014. The Understanding Dementia MOOC is delivered on the Desire2Learn platform.

http://www.utas.edu.au/wicking/wca/mooc

Helping Australians with dementia, and their carers
WA DBMAS: Dee Harding’s visit to Port Hedland, Mon 16\textsuperscript{th} & Tues 17\textsuperscript{th} September 2013.

The places I visited during my time in the Port/South Hedland were: The Pilbara Community Aged Care Services - Hedland Health Campus (Hospital), Karlarra House, the Southern Cross Day Care, and the South Hedland TAFE.: 

During this trip I was able to meet some wonderful friendly people. One of which was Corrie from the South Hedland Aged Care Assessment Team. Other names worth mentioning are: Jane Mepham (Acting Staff Development), who directed me to the High Dependency Suite where I conducted some education on Dementia Behaviour Management within the acute sector. I also met with Sisilia and Grace RN’s from Karlarra House, some education was provided to the care staff on recognising behaviours and 6 referrals were taken. We continue to have ongoing discussion regarding these cases and are in the process of organising an Audio Visual hook up via our new system with the Pilbara shortly.

Alison, the Coordinator from Southern Cross Day Centre and Deb the HACC assessments officer where two lovely individuals I met whilst attending this centre. On this day, approximately 10-15 locals came to attend the day centre. Some reflected on their lives growing up in families who were amongst the initial settlers in Port Hedland. Some reminiscing about loved ones with dementia and how some were shunned from society prior to their passing due to the apparent ignorance during this time associated with the illness. Thank goodness we have moved on since then. I provided an education session to this group using the Indigenous based “What is Dementia” resource book.
ACTIVE BODY ACTIVE BRAIN comes to Darwin
Heart Foundation Walking is Australia’s largest network of free community based walking groups led by volunteer Walk Organisers. It is based on the successful predecessor program Heart Foundation Just Walk It which began in 1995. The national network today offers approximately 1500 walking groups Australia wide and engages over 22 000 active participants.

In June 2012, Heart Foundation Walking Active Body Active Brain project was funded by Alzheimer’s Australia National Quality Dementia Care Initiative. The aim of the project was to increase the access to and uptake of Heart Foundation Walking for people with dementia, their family carers and or Service Providers. Walking is a highly appropriate activity for people with dementia and promotes a simple non-medicinal approach to responding to Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia.

Now in its evaluation phase, the project is gathering some encouraging outcomes that regular walking is having a positive impact on the quality of life for people with dementia.

Kate Ganley from NT DBMAS with Juninga Aged Care Facility Darwin facilitated one of two NT pilot sites, the other being Alzheimer’s Australia NT.

You may have seen Juninga residents wearing red T shirts, lanyards and hats, and even in one case sparkly hearts as earrings, and wondered what was happening?

Juninga was selected to be part of a Heart Foundation project called ‘Active Body Active Brain,’ which has been happening in residential facilities throughout Australia. It is designed to be a non-medicinal approach to improving health and quality of life, while reducing the impact of symptoms of dementia, including sleep patterns, mood and depression. The difference about the Juninga project was that it was the first indigenous group to be part of a pilot study.

Each Monday during the 12 week project, residents were asked to participate in the study, which was far from the concept of a traditional walking group in many respects. Almost 50% of the residents were wheelchair mobilising, which may seem illogical given it was a walking group, however the majority of residents ‘walking’ used the opportunity to engage with other residents and staff, or to reminisce, and for a variety of other needs which were met by the process. Although the study didn’t chart specific parameters in terms of sleep improvement, improvement in behaviours etc, it was widely acknowledged that residents enjoyed the opportunities given by the study for social interaction.

Thanks to Jenny, Barry and all staff members who assisted with the practicalities which allowed the study to take place.

Kate Ganley NTDBMAS & Heart Foundation Walk Organiser

For details of how to join or start a walking group near you - call 1300 26 27 87or visit www.heartfoundation.org.au/walking
It’s Never too late- Technology for fun, engagement and behaviour management in dementia care

NT DBMAS and Respite Options for Senior Territorians (ROST) day respite centres in Alice Springs and Darwin are trialling and showcasing the iN2L technology in their communities for dementia care. The coordinator of Darwin ROST had seen the system demonstrated at Alzheimer’s Australia conference and in partnership with NT DBMAS has entered into the trial for the benefit of her clients and upskilling of her staff to better manage behaviours that impact on their ability to care in the day centre.

Training took place in Alice Springs and Darwin in early November for these new systems from Novitatech in SA with DBMAS and ROST staff learning to support the systems.

Staff and clients have initially reported enjoyment and engagement as they traverse the world via virtual tours and have fun with group games and Karaoke.

Evaluations will be held over the next 12 months to look at benefits to engagement, reduction in impact of behaviours in dementia. Aiming for increased carer ability to manage behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia that impact on care in these community environments.